



CCM Testimony

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE

March 1, 2023

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent 168 towns and cities.

HB 6761 An Act Concerning A Review Of Drinking Water Supply Locations And Equipment In Public Schools

The bill would require each local and regional board of education to conduct a test of drinking water quality for each school building or facility, and (2) allow any necessary improvements to those locations to be eligible under the School Construction Grant Program.

Ensuring that students can rely on clean, safe drinking water is essential to protecting the health of our students, and is paramount for local officials. It is certainly laudable for enhanced testing and state financial support to make improvements in water quality. Without state assistance, the cost for needed repairs in schools across the state would overwhelm municipal resources. However, HB 6761 lacks some specifics and safeguards to ensure proper implementation.

In particular, the bill lacks specifics regarding testing parameters. It is questionable whether school administrators have the capacity and tools to effectively test water quality to meet the intent of the bill. CCM would recommend that the bill provide greater flexibility and/or allow for any testing be in coordination with local public health.

Furthermore, while CCM appreciates expanding eligibility under the School Construction Grant Program to include repairs to drinking water systems, the proposal fails to provide municipalities with adequate resources and legal protections when improvements are needed. Specifically, if repairs are necessary it may require significant time for those repairs to be made to align with the School Construction Grant program. CCM would encourage the committee to hold municipalities harmless for liability while any repairs and replacement of water systems are being made.

CCM urges the committee to take the above-mentioned factors into consideration before acting on HB 6761

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, State and Federal Relations Manager of CCM at mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org or 203-500-7556.